

Slough storm home

Six minute nightmare!

A DISASTROUS six minute spell just before half time sent Wycombe crashing to a heavy defeat against local rivals Slough in their Berger Isthmian League championship battle at Loakes Park on Saturday.

During that nightmare period Slough took advantage of three belated Christmas presents to secure a firm hold on the match and so enhance their prospects of taking the Premier Division title for the first time.

By recording this comfortable victory Slough ended Wycombe's unbeaten 15 match home league run, stretching back to the opening game of the season. It was also the Blues' first league defeat anywhere for nine matches.

There was no doubting Slough's overall superiority. The experience of Terry Reardon and Pat Morrissey in mid-field shone through in the heavy conditions and with the forwards taking their chances, the Rebels look a distinctly good bet for the title.

Hesitancy

Wycombe were desperately disappointing. In front of their largest league crowd for more than three years, they seemed to freeze. Gone was the total commitment they showed against Sutton, gone was the neat passing and control that demoralised Woking.

They were replaced by a shambling hesitancy in everything they did. They did not win one 50-50 tackle and

when they did have the ball, they wanted more time than Slough were prepared to give them.

With Keith Mead coming in for the holidaying Steve Hardwick and George Borg returning after suspension, the defence had a slightly different look about it, but that does not excuse a listless performance. Indeed, Mead was probably their most reliable player.

The writing was on the wall from the start. Slough looked ominously sound at the back and were clearly going to rely on quick breaks to launch their attacks. The same tactics that brought Bournemouth success last month.

Off-balance

Eddie James went close with a header from a corner before Slough deservedly took the lead in the 32nd minute. Paul Birdseye fouled Barry Friend to the left of the penalty area.

Pat Morrissey sent the free-kick to the near post where big defender Eric Young stooped to send a low angled header into the far corner. Gary Lester admitted later it was a shot he would normally have expected to save but he was off-balance and the ball crept under his body.

Three minutes later the large Slough contingent were

cheering even more lustily and once again Morrissey set up the chance.

The former Watford player timed his pass to perfection and enabled Dave Russell to beat the off-side trap. The former Flackwell forward was coolness personified as he took the ball past Lester and scored from a narrow angle.

But worse was to follow from Wycombe's angle as they conceded a rapid third goal.

Lester was at fault again, failing to cut out Friend's cross from the left. Russell nipped into fire a shot against the bar and Eddie James headed in the rebound from right on the line.

Struggling

Slough should have made it 4-0 a minute after the break when Lester completely missed Morrissey's cross. But Friend's half-hearted shot was turned round the post by Birdseye.

With his side struggling desperately in mid-field, Mike Keen brought off Bob Dell who could provide a little challenge to Slough's veteran Terry Reardon. Terry Scott, who normally plays upfront, came on as substitute for his first senior appearance of the season.

Wycombe took advantage of the fact that Slough were

sitting on their lead to play their best football of the match and eventually pulled back eleven minutes from time with a beautifully taken goal by Terry Glynn who raced onto a through ball and sent a low shot past Teale.

For a while Wycombe threatened to get another but Slough had the final word two minutes from the end. With Wycombe on all-out attack, Friend's long clearance put Mick Kiely in the clear.

Lester dived to save his shot but could not stop James scoring from the rebound to round off a memorable day for Slough.

George Borg was booked for retaliation by the referee who also cautioned Slough's Morrissey (time-wasting) and Reardon (foul tackle).

WYCOMBE: G. Lester, P. Birdseye, G. Borg, R. Davies, K. Mead, R. Dell (sub: T. Scott 50 mins), S. Long, J. Jacobs, T. Glynn, G. Toll, M. Hollifield.

SLOUGH: R. Teale, D. Yerby, S. Norman, J. Beyer, E. Young, T. Reardon, D. Russell, B. Friend, M. Kiely, P. Morrissey, E. James. Sub: B. Poynter (not used).

Referee: R. Bigger (Croydon).

Half-time 0-3. Scorers: Wycombe — Glynn (79 mins); Slough — Young (32), Russell (35), James 2 (38,88).

Attendance: 2,010.

BERGER ISTHMIAN LEAGUE PREMIER DIVISION (up to December 28)

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Enfield	30	15	8	7	58	35	53
Wycombe	28	14	7	7	52	34	49
Slough	24	13	8	3	38	22	47
Sutton	27	13	8	6	51	38	47
Harrow	27	13	6	8	46	29	45
Dagenham	29	12	9	8	56	44	45
Dulwich	27	11	10	6	46	37	43
Leytonstone	25	11	6	8	46	38	39
Bromley	27	10	8	9	44	44	38
Hayes	26	11	4	11	23	29	37
*Barking	32	10	8	14	42	55	36
Woking	30	10	3	17	33	49	33
Boreham Wd	25	8	8	9	33	37	32
Tooting	29	9	5	15	31	38	32
Leatherhead	30	7	11	12	23	34	32
Staines	28	8	7	13	32	40	31
Carshalton	26	9	2	15	34	44	29
Croydon	24	5	13	6	21	21	28
Harlow	25	6	10	9	31	38	28
Hendon	24	7	7	10	31	38	28
Walthamstow	27	8	4	15	27	34	28
Hitchin	22	7	6	9	30	28	27

* 2 pts deducted.

Visit to Hendon

WYCOMBE meet Hendon for the first time tomorrow (Saturday) when they travel to Claremont Road for a Berger Isthmian League Premier Division match.

Hendon were bottom of the table for a time but have since improved and will provide the Blues with a stern test.

Reports of this match plus Wycombe's visit to Slough on New Year's Day will appear in Midweek, published on Tuesday.